

January 21, 2000

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Commissioner Jane Henney, M.D.
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 1471
Rockville, MD 20857

fax: 301-443-3100

Dear Commissioner Henney:

Overuse of antibiotics as growth promoters in livestock has been linked to the emergence of antibiotic-resistant diseases.

Many of the drugs used to enhance growth in chickens, pigs, and cattle are the same as, or closely related to, those used to treat people. Fearing a rise in untreatable infectious diseases, the European Union (EU) has banned all growth-promoting uses of antibiotics used in human medicine.

In the United States, however, the Food and Drug Administration has taken no action against drugs currently in use. Instead, it has merely begun a series of meetings to discuss possible restrictions on new approvals of antibiotics.

I urge the FDA to follow the EU's lead and move immediately to ban animal uses of growth-promoting antibiotics used in human medicine.

Sincerely,

M. Virginia Grady

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